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No. 39.

"BIBLE VIEW OF SLAVERY,

BY JOHN H. HOPKINS, D. D., BISHOP OF THE DIOCESE OF VERMONT,"

Examined.

BY HENRY DRISLER.

NEW YORK:

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LOYAL PUBLICATION SOCIETY,

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No. 39.

A REPLY TO THE "BIBLE VIEW OF SLAVERY, BY J. H. HOPKINS, D. D., BISHOP OF THE DIOCESE OF VERMONT."

BY H. DRISLER.

THE "Bible View of Slavery" is the title of an essay by Bishop Hopkins, of Vermont, reissued in a pamphlet of sixteen pages, by an association for the "Diffusion of Political Knowledge," in this city, to influence the recent election in Pennsylvania. Though professing only to bring forward the Biblical arguments in defence of slavery, it yet discusses political subjects, drawing an unfavorable picture of the immorality and crime of our free Northern States, as contrasted with the moral purity and primitive simplicity of the slaveholding Southern States. The value of its political teachings, with its bitter denunciation of the doctrines of the Declaration of Independence, filling four and a half of its sixteen pages, has been already passed upon by the people of Pennsylvania. Its attempt to press Holy Scripture into the cause of a system of tyranny almost unequalled in the history of our race, and founded on violence and robbery—a system which, frowned upon by the almost universal reprobation of the Christian world, sets itself in defiant opposition to and raises its rebellious hand against the duly constituted authorities, has called forth the indignant protest of the noble Bishop of Pennsylvania, in whose diocese it was circulated.

The assertion which the writer undertakes to prove from Holy Scripture is this, as set forth by himself: "The slavery of the negro race, as maintained in the Southern States, appears to me fully authorized in both the Old and New

Testaments, which, as the written word of God, afford the only infallible standard of moral rights and obligations:" "and thus [by the Southern slaves becoming Christianized through slavery] the wisdom and goodness of God are vindicated in the sanction which his Word has given, and the sentence originally passed upon Canaan, as a curse, has been converted into a blessing" (p. 16); and again: "Under the rule of the Scriptures and the Constitution of the United States, the negro belongs to an inferior race, which *the law did not presume to be fitted for freedom at any age*" (p. 12); and finally: "God, in his wisdom and providence, caused the patriarch Noah to predict that he [the negro] should be the servant of servants to the posterity of Japhet" (p. 12). This, then, is the proposition, that the *negro slavery of the Southern States* is justified by Holy Scripture.

In the examination of the writer's arguments, therefore, we have nothing to do directly with Hebrew slavery, or Greek slavery, or Roman slavery, or any other system than that now in force in the slaveholding states of the Union. The writer divides his arguments into two main heads, those from the Old Testament and those from the New Testament Scriptures. The most of these have necessarily nothing to do with the subject under discussion, as they relate exclusively to the special enactments for the regulation of the Hebrew social system. By way of introduction the writer asserts that "Slavery appears to have existed in all the ages of our world, by the universal evidence of history, whether sacred or profane." It may be sufficient to set over against this, the assertion of one certainly not *less* eminent in the church than the author of the pamphlet before us. St. Chrysostom says: "But if you ask whence slavery has its origin, and why it has entered into human life, for I know that many readily ask and are desirous of learning such things, I will tell you; avarice, vulgar display, and insatiable cupidity, begat slavery; since Noah had no slave, Abel had no slave, nor Seth, nor yet those after this;" (Hom. in Epist. ad Ephes. 22.)

The first argument from the Old Testament, and the only one really touching the subject, is from Genesis ix. 25:

"Cursed be Canaan, *a servant of servants* shall he be to his brethren. Blessed be the Lord God of Shem, and Canaan *shall be his servant.* God shall enlarge Japhet, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem, and Canaan shall be his servant;" which the writer applies to the unfortunate African in this wise: "But the actual fulfilment was reserved for his (Ham's) posterity, after they had lost the knowledge of God and become utterly polluted by the abominations of heathen idolatry. The Almighty, foreseeing this total degradation of the race, ordained them to servitude or slavery under the descendants of Shem and Japhet, doubtless because he judged it *to be their fittest condition.*" Here and in subsequent passages the writer substitutes Ham for Canaan, which is essential to his object; and combines with this the astonishing declaration that we are still living under the Mosaic law. To show that this is no exaggeration or perversion, however surprising it may be, we give his own words. In fact these two points are essential in order to derive any countenance to negro slavery from the Bible: 1st, that the curse passed upon Canaan shall extend to the other children of Ham; and 2dly, that we, conjointly with the children of Israel, should be directed or authorized by God's law to buy bondmen and bondmaids of the heathen nations around us. Otherwise what becomes of the African slave trade, and its supporters? After quoting our Saviour's words: "Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets. I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil" (Matt. v. 17, which very passage ought to have stayed the hand of this Christian Bishop, as he copied it, by recalling to his mind that Saviour's own summary of the law and the prophets, in Matt. xxii. 37–39: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind;" and "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself; on these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets")—he goes on to say: "The next evidence which proves that *the Mosaic law was not held to be inconsistent with the Gospel* occurs in the statement of the Apostles to St. Paul, made some twenty years, at least, after the establishment of the first Christian church in Jerusalem. 'Thou

seest, brother,' said they, 'how many thousands of Jews there are who believe, *and they are all zealous of the law.*' (Acts, xxi. 20.) How could this have been possible, *if the law was supposed to be abolished by the new dispensation?*"

That the law here referred to was the ceremonial law is quite evident from the rest of the chapter; for in the next verse St. Luke says: "And they are informed of thee, that thou teachest all the Jews which are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise their children, neither to walk after the customs." They therefore prevail upon St. Paul to go through certain ceremonies of the Jewish religion, the conclusion of which leads to a tumult, in which St. Paul's life is in danger, and he is only saved by the interposition of the Roman commander. In the next chapter (xxii. 3), St. Paul says, in his address to the people, that he was "taught according to the perfect manner of the law of the fathers, and was zealous toward God, as ye all are this day." Under this Mosaic law, then, one of the most stringent and most frequently repeated commands of God, and the longest in the Decalogue is: "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy," etc., and, in enforcing this command, God said: "Every one that defileth the (Sabbath day) shall surely be put to death; for whosoever doeth *any work* therein, that soul shall be cut off from among his people." If the law is not fulfilled or abolished, then this command is in force, for it was not repealed by our Saviour, since he taught on the Sabbath days; yet the whole Christian world, with few exceptions, constantly violate it, observing another day, and thereby incurring the penalty of death. St. Paul says (Ephesians ii. 15) of Christ: "Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments (contained) in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, (so) making peace." Again (Gal. ii. 16), "Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law, for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified." Hooker (Eccles. Law, bk. 3, ch. 10)

says: "The law of ceremonies came from God, Moses had commandment to commit it unto the sacred records of Scripture, where it continueth even unto this very day and hour; in force still as the Jew surmiseth because God himself was the author of it. . . . . But (that which they in the blindness of their obdurate hearts are not able to discern) sith the end for which that law was ordained is now fulfilled, past and gone; how should it but cease any longer to be which hath no longer any cause of being in force as before." God's moral law endures though institutions change, and "thou shalt not covet" will be in force, when and where no "man servant," or "maid servant" exists to be coveted.

But let us turn to the Bible narrative, and see whether it sustains the Bishop's proposition. In the ninth chapter of Genesis the sacred writer says: "God blessed *Noah and his sons*, and said unto them, Be fruitful and multiply . . . . and the fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast, etc. . . . . Into your hand are they delivered," and again, vv. 8, 9, "God spake unto Noah and to his *sons* [no exception is made] with him, saying, Behold I establish my covenant with *you* and with *your seed* after you." Thus from God's holy Word we see that the Almighty blessed *Noah and his sons*, and made a covenant with them and with their seed after them; and that blessing we are justified in believing continues unto this day. In vv. 21–25 of the same chapter Noah's drunkenness and Ham's offence are narrated, and the curse pronounced on Canaan as previously quoted. No revocation of God's blessing previously bestowed is hinted at, no censure is passed upon the other children of Ham; there is not the slightest authority in the Bible for any such unwarrantable inference as the writer draws that all Ham's posterity passed under the curse. In chapter x. 6, we are told that the sons of Ham were Cush and Mizraim and Phut and Canaan; in vv. 15–18, the children of Canaan are enumerated, but we will first follow the other sons of Ham in the Bible narrative, and then trace the posterity of Canaan, and we will thus clearly see that the latter alone were under the curse.

Without entering into any of the ethnological or linguistic speculations in regard to the people of Africa, but taking the

Bible narrative as it is commonly received, that Mizraim is Egypt, and Cush Ethiopia, the land above Egypt, we will find that the Bible has made special provision to secure us against the fallacious reasonings of these Christian advocates of most un-Christian slavery. Sacred history informs us that the Israelites found refuge and shelter in Egypt, that afterward they were reduced to servitude and served the Egyptians many years. In due time God led them forth out of Egypt, and it is to be noted how frequently and how earnestly the Almighty impresses this fact upon his chosen people, "I brought you out of the *land of bondage;*" the very preamble to the ten commandments recites the fact that he had brought them out of the *house of bondage.* In the subsequent history of God's people frequent mention is made of the Egyptians; sometimes they conquered portions of the land of Israel, sometimes they came to aid the Israelites against their enemies; but they never were reduced to subjection and held in bondage by them, and finally what is conclusive in their case that they were not under the curse is the statement in Deut. xxiii. 7, 8, "Thou shalt not *abhor an Egyptian,* because thou wast a stranger in his land; the *children that are begotten of them shall enter into the congregation of the Lord* in their third generation." Is any further proof required that the curse upon Canaan did not extend to Ham's other children? Is it not a fearful thing for mortal man to seek to hurl the thunders of the Almighty, and to override the Gospel dispensation of peace and pardon in behalf of a loathsome and accursed system of robbery and oppression? When Balaam was called upon by Balak to curse Israel he replied, "How shall I curse whom God hath not cursed?" There are Christian ministers, it seems, who have no such scruples.

Again in Isaiah (xix. 21): "And the Lord shall be known unto Egypt, and the Egyptians shall know the Lord in that day, and shall do sacrifice and oblation; yea, and they shall vow a vow unto the Lord and perform it." Isa. xix. 24: "In that day shall Israel be the third with Egypt, and with Assyria even a blessing in the midst of the land." In Psalm lxviii. 31, we read, "Princes shall come out of

Egypt," and "Ethiopia shall stretch out her hands unto God." Some of the descendants of Cush were settled in Arabia and Upper Asia, among them Nimrod the mighty hunter, and their descendants were among the conquerors of the Israelites in some of their many revolts against the commands of their God.

Let us now turn to the record of Canaan, and see on the other hand, in the history of his posterity, the positive fulfilment of the curse. In Genesis x. 15–18, the children of Canaan are enumerated, "Sidon and Heth, and the Jebusite, and the Amorite, and the Girgasite, and the Hivite, and the Arkite, and the Sinite, and the Arvadite, and the Zemarite, and the Hamathite." In Deut. xx. 10–14 and 16, 17, after the Israelites have been directed to slay the male inhabitants of the cities that are far off and not of the Canaanites, they are expressly commanded, "But of the cities of these people which the Lord thy God doth give thee for an inheritance, thou shalt save alive nothing that breatheth, but thou shalt utterly destroy them; namely, the Hittites and the Amorites, *the Canaanites* and the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites; as the Lord thy God hath commanded thee," i. e., the people of God are here expressly directed, instead of making slaves of the descendants of Canaan, the very ones enumerated above, not the other descendants of Ham, to exterminate them. But in Judges ii. 21, the Lord says; "I also will not henceforth drive out any from before them of the nations which Joshua left when he died:" in iii. 5, 6, we read: "And the children of Israel dwelt among the Canaanites, Hittites, and Amorites, and Perizzites, and Hivites, and Jebusites, and they took their daughters to be their wives, and gave their daughters to their sons, and served their gods," in this way now and on many subsequent occasions blending the blood of the races. In 1 Kings ix, 20, 21, Solomon is said to have levied bond-service upon all the children that were left of them in the land, whom the children of Israel were not able to destroy, and their descendants are enumerated finally among those who returned from the captivity. (Nehemiah vii. 57.)

Hence it is manifest that the curse pronounced by Noah on

Canaan was strictly limited to his posterity, and that curse was, therefore, exclusively confined to a *white* or at least *non-negro* race. It was moreover fulfilled in the dealings of the Hebrews with the surrounding nations in their conquest and occupation of the promised land.

In the prophets we see already the foreshadowing of the new dispensation of mercy instead of justice, of the remission of all past offences, of the breaking down of that middle wall of partition which the Apostle speaks of between Jew and Gentile, by which all men were placed on an equality in the eyes of God without respect of persons; as we read in Malachi, who closes the books of the Old Testament, "Have we not all one Father? hath not one God created us?" In Jeremiah (xviii. 8), God says: "If that nation against whom I have pronounced turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them." In those days, too, were men who resisted the degenerate and fanatical spirit of philanthropists, and insisted upon the letter of the law as we learn from these words of Ezekiel (xviii. 19): "Yet say ye, why? doth not the son bear the iniquity of the father?" to which the answer is, "When the son hath done that which is lawful and right, and hath kept all my statutes, and hath done them, he shall surely live. The soul that sinneth it shall die. *The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father;*" and again, in the same chapter, "But if a man be just and do that which is lawful and right, ... and hath not oppressed any, hath spoiled none by violence, hath given his bread to the hungry . . . . hath executed true judgment between man and man, ... he is just, he shall surely live, saith the Lord."

Finally with the advent of our Saviour came full pardon to all mankind, "for he is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also *for the sins of the whole world.*" (1 John ii. 2.) He expiated in his own person on the cross the curse upon Canaan, having in his own veins the blood of that very race, since he was descended in a direct line from Rahab of Jericho (to say nothing of Bathsheba and Ruth), if we are to believe the received account of Christ's genealogy. Was this accidental, that the blood of one of this race should mingle with that of the princely line of

Judah, David, and Christ? Or was it not a part of God's eternal design, that in Christ all nations of the earth should be blessed? With Christ's expiation of the curse, therefore, ceased the slavery of the race of Canaan which was the penalty of the curse. How can any Christian man, how can any Christian minister, dare to question the universality of Christ's atonement? How can any minister of the Episcopal Church read in his place Sunday after Sunday those consoling words of the glorious communion service, "for that Thou of thy tender mercy didst give thy only Son Jesus Christ to suffer death upon the cross for our redemption, who made there (by his one oblation of himself once offered) *a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world,*" and then deliberately write and publish to the world, that the slavery of the *negro race in the Southern States* is justified by the curse pronounced by Noah upon Canaan?

The other proofs of slavery being sanctioned by the Almighty have all reference to the Hebrew polity, and refer either to the poor Hebrews, their own children, or to the heathen nations around them, and therefore are utterly irrelevant to the point at issue. Whoever wishes to see Hebrew slavery fully and ably discussed, with its numerous checks upon the power of the master, its almost innumerable provisions for the oppressed, sometimes when a master had daughters but no son giving a daughter in marriage to the servant with the inheritance, its amelioration of a harsher earlier slavery, which was adopted like polygamy and other oriental practices by the Hebrews, themselves an Oriental race, sometimes with, sometimes against the consent of the Almighty, must consult the treatise of Dr. Mielziner, admirably translated in the "Evangelical Review" for January, 1862, by Professor Schmidt of Columbia College. To look for a moment at the writer's other arguments: The next proof he adduces is the case of Abraham, who had 318 bond servants born in his own house; and also the case of Hagar, Sarah's fugitive female slave, whom the angel of the Lord commanded to *return to her mistress and submit herself*. The writer adds: "If the philanthropists of our age had

been willing to take the counsel of that angel for their guide, it would have preserved the peace and welfare of the Union." In a subsequent part of his pamphlet the writer finds a difficulty in maintaining the doctrine of the continuance of the Mosaic dispensation when he seeks to combat the objection, that his argument proves polygamy as well as slavery. He satisfies himself, however, if not his readers, by making slavery an ordinance of the Almighty, but polygamy and the law of divorce which Christ censured, a mere permitted enactment of Moses. In the case of Hagar, the angel, when sending back the slave, tells her at the same time that she is with child by her master, though that master's lawful wife was living, while in Genesis (xxi. 13) God said to Abraham: "And also of the son of the bondwoman will I make a nation, because he is thy seed." (See this applied to the two covenants in Gal. iv. 24.) In like manner the heads of the twelve tribes of Israel were sons of Jacob by two different wives and their two handmaids, all which was allowed and sanctioned by the Almighty before Moses wrote his laws. In 2 Sam. xii. 8, God says to David (through Nathan): "I gave thee thy master's house, and *thy master's wives* into thy bosom," &c.

The next argument is taken from the Tenth Commandment: "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife, nor his man-servant, nor his maid-servant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is thy neighbor's." The Bishop thinks there is some prejudice against the idea of *property* in a human being, and is "aware that the wives of our day may take umbrage at the law which places them in the same sentence with the slave, and even with the house and the cattle. But the truth is none the less certain." The writer is certainly consistent in admitting the conclusion from his premises. But what think you, Christian wives, who are with your husbands one flesh, no longer twain, of that Christianity which puts you on a level with the house, and the ox, and the ass? which calls you, our wives and mothers, property, merely to enable the Christian minister to aid the slave-driver and the slave-breeder in keeping his hold on the throat of the man-servant and the maid-servant, lest

those for whom our Saviour died might claim His death as their release?

Again we may ask, what are the commandments? They are the same which God spake in the 20th chapter of Exodus, saying, "I am the Lord thy God that brought thee out of the land of Egypt and out of the house of bondage: Thou shalt" &c. If we hold to the literal interpretation, then "thee" and "thou" must refer to the same person, and the commandments must be restricted to those who came out of the land of Egypt. Our Saviour, who was the fulfilment of the law, omitted the "man-servant" and the "maid-servant" in his summary, and substituted the universal brotherhood of man. Will any one quote God's express command to his chosen people, to exterminate the heathen around them, to leave nothing alive that breatheth, as authority for similar acts at the present day? Can any people in the present age of the world stand in a similar relation to the Almighty with that of the Israelites of old, whose deliverance and settlement in their appointed land were a succession of miracles? But having shown, as we trust, the fallacy of the argument which deduces *negro* slavery from Noah's curse upon Canaan, it is hardly necessary to dwell upon the other arguments from the Old Testament, for they do not touch the case.

Let us now turn to the second main head, or the arguments in defence of *negro slavery* from the New Testament. The writer enters upon this portion of his subject with the remark: "I grant, of course, that we, as Christians, are bound by the precepts and example of the Saviour and his Apostles;" while at the same time he quietly ignores the influence of their personal example altogether, since neither our Saviour nor his Apostles ever held slaves. But we will quote the writer's statement on this head of his subject in full: "First, then, we ask what the divine Redeemer said in reference to slavery. And the answer is perfectly undeniable. HE DID NOT ALLUDE TO IT AT ALL. Not one word upon the subject is recorded by any of the four Evangelists who gave his life and doctrines to the world. Yet slavery was in full existence at the time, throughout Judea; and the Roman empire, according to Gibbon, contained sixty millions of

slaves, on the lowest probable computation! How prosperous and united would our glorious republic be at this hour, if the eloquent and pertinacious declaimers against slavery had been willing to follow their Saviour's example!" That is the argument, and that the deduction.

Next follow the two arguments previously quoted to sustain in full force the Mosaic law, and then those passages are given from the Epistles, which direct servants (*bond servants* or *slaves*) to be obedient to their masters, concluding with St. Paul's letter to Philemon, by the hands of his 'fugitive slave' Onesimus. As in the previous case from the Old Testament, where our argument was directed against the general principle, rather than the individual cases, so here we hope to show that the precepts and example of our Saviour rendered the continued existence of slavery impossible; this being established it will be unnecessary to follow the writer into special details. It may be remarked, however, that the whole argument from the New Testament falls to the ground, as specially bearing upon *negro slavery*. It would only prove the justice of Roman slavery, with its sixty millions of slaves, as the writer quotes from Gibbon. Now of whom did these slaves consist? Not of the descendants of Canaan only; not of those said to be under the curse merely; but of the descendants of Shem and Japhet, as well as of those of Ham. Guizot says above one hundred thousand prisoners were taken in the Jewish war, and Titus sold all the inhabitants of Jerusalem under seventeen years of age. Men of rank and intelligence were reduced to slavery; had it not been for the influence of "the precepts and example of our Saviour and his Apostles" the question which the writer pronounces puerile, "How would you like to be a slave?" might not have been so absurd. The citizens of a conquered city, when once the battering ram had struck the walls, had lost all rights, and were put to death or sold at auction. According to this principle Gen. Grant, instead of paroling his 30,000 prisoners at Vicksburg, should have sold them for thirty millions of dollars.

Now it must be remembered that our Saviour came into the world to preach a personal religion, a reformation of the indi-

vidual heart and life, and therefore had nothing to do with corporations or political ordinances. He belonged to a conquered and subject race, itself under the curse of the Almighty; whatever reformation he desired to make in governments or political institutions must be done by first reforming the individuals controlling them. And this was what actually took place. His silence on the subject of slavery as an institution was no more an approval of it in general, than it was of the oppression and abominations connected with it; the application of torture in an Athenian court, which always accompanied the testimony of a slave; putting to death the slaves of a master who had been murdered; the barbarities of the amphitheatre; crucifixion for the most trifling misconduct (such as speaking disrespectfully, *Blair's Roman Slavery*, p. 111), and the oriental practice introduced into Greece and Rome of making eunuchs, to whose condition our Saviour incidently refers without censuring it. Did he therefore approve of this practice, and would it be justifiable by Biblical arguments?

But let us look at the result that soon flowed from the lessons of humility, love, and human brotherhood, which form the teachings of the meek and lowly Jesus. "Who is my neighbor?" Not the favored Jew, not the self-sufficient Levite, but the despised and hated Samaritan. "A new commandment give I you, that ye love one another." "And whosoever will be chief among you let him be your servant (*doulos*)." Christ came on one occasion into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and read from Esaias: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; . . . . to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised" (St. Luke, iv. 18); and he began to say to them, "This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears" (21). Bishop Hopkins tells us, quoting Gibbon's authority, that in our Saviour's time the Roman empire contained sixty millions of slaves. What became of them? In the course of centuries all those provinces of this same Roman empire, which adopted Christianity, abolished slavery. Slavery only continued in those provinces of the old empire, which were overrun and subdued by Oriental and non-Christian races.

And now we see this fact staring us full in the face, that the Christian countries of Europe are the non-slaveholding countries, while slaves are found under the Turk and the infidel.

Whence comes this result, if not from the silent but irresistible influence of "*the precepts and example of our Saviour and his apostles*," which this writer admits we are bound by? Will he tell us that Christianity had nothing to do with it? Hear what he says on this head (p. 4): "It is said by some that the great principles of the Gospel, love to God and love to man, necessarily involved the condemnation of slavery. Yet how should it have any such result, when we remember that this was no new principle, but on the contrary, was laid down by the Deity to his own chosen people, and was quoted from the Old Testament by the Saviour himself? And why should slavery be thought inconsistent with it? In the relation of master and slave, we are assured by our Southern brethren that there is incomparably more mutual love than can ever be found between the employer and the hireling." Is not this the very spirit which God himself rebukes by the mouth of his prophet Ezekiel: "Yet ye say, The way of the Lord is not equal," and "yet ye say, Doth not the son bear the iniquity of the father?" Will Christian men, will Christian ministers, to support a tottering and abominable system of wrong and oppression, pluck from the crown of our holy religion its brightest jewel? Will they join with the infidel and skeptic in ascribing this amelioration in the condition of mankind to a vague civilization, and aid in proclaiming "Christianity a failure"? Even the skeptic Gibbon did not deny this praise to Christianity. But the author says (p. 13): "The Anglo-Saxon race is king, why should not the African race be subject, and subject in that way for which it is best adapted, and in which it may be more safe, more useful, more happy, than in any other which has yet been opened to it, in the annals of the world?" This is strange doctrine—that might makes right—for a Christian minister to promulgate. On what ground, then, does he attack (p. 13) the much-abused King of Dahomey? Is not his the more powerful intellect, and

should not the surrounding tribes be subject? Has the writer any other reason to give for interfering in the local institutions of this king, who is an independent monarch, obeying his own laws—which are his own will—than that same *higher law of conscience*, for obeying which, in reference to the injustice of negro slavery at the South, he assails so violently the philanthropists of our age?

But to return to the point from which we digressed: the religion of Christ, then, we assert, practically put an end to slavery. What distinction of master and slave could long exist in a community where the disciples of the same Lord had all things common? under a religion which taught men to be lowly in their own eyes; which taught that "God had chosen the base things of the world and things which are despised, yea, and things which are not, to bring to naught the things that are; that no flesh should glory in his presence" (1 Cor. i. 27, 28). Having thus shown that the Gospel influence, by acting upon the hearts and consciences of individuals, gradually but surely worked the release of the slave and the extinction of slavery, it will hardly be deemed necessary to dwell upon those exhortations and consolations addressed by the apostles to the faithful servants of Christ, who were also servants after the flesh. All these exhortations show the sympathy of the apostles (St. Paul particularly) with the condition of their unfortunate brethren; where their case is hopeless with an earthly master, they exhort them not to bring reproach upon their Christian profession; advising them to bear for a time their earthly misfortune, since God, for Christ's sake, will in good season give them eternal freedom. St. Paul was a Roman citizen; he was also a Jew, who had abandoned and decried the traditions of his fathers; he was bitterly hated and eagerly watched by the unbelieving Jews, who sought every opportunity of entrapping him. His mission was in no respect political; he was an ambassador of Christ: his duty was to enforce that personal purity of life, and reformation of the heart, which he knew would work all other changes in due time. But in his writings, as everywhere in the New Testament, slavery is the hard lot, to be borne—the burden and the yoke; freedom—the blessing

and reward of endurance. How constantly is this contrast introduced—freedom, liberty—that liberty with which Christ has made us free on the one hand ; and the bondage of sin—servants to uncleanness and to iniquity on the other ? "Ye are bought with a price, be not ye the servants of men." (1 Cor. vii. 23.) Such language, even on spiritual subjects, could not be addressed to men, and men of intelligence, as many of those slaves were, without exciting hopes and wishes for their bodily emancipation. But this the apostles could not procure for them, except by appeal to the consciences of their masters. There was no supreme government which acknowledged the obligations of Christianity. It was therefore necessary to teach slaves the same lessons of submission for the time, which the apostles themselves were bound to observe. How often were they seized upon without process of law, dragged outside the walls, and scourged or stoned ? Though they submitted patiently to such treatment, and gloried in it, we certainly cannot quote their encouragements to each other under the injustice as removing its illegality or sinfulness.

The passages, therefore, which are quoted from St. Paul and the other apostles, as justifying slavery by advising submission to masters, have no force except as addressed to slaves under a heathen master, or where Christianity is an intrusive and foreign element in an unfriendly and heathen state. In the case of Onesimus, whom it is said St. Paul sent back to his "master" as a "slave," how marked the difference between his return and that of Anthony Burns, or any other fugitive slave from the *Christian* South. Read the letter of St. Paul throughout, and then say if it be possible that the two persons there mentioned could have stood afterwards, even allowing they did before, in the relation of master and slave. With what sweet and tender solicitude does the Apostle speak of this "runaway slave ;" what fatherly affection breaks out in every sentence ; with what earnestness, nay, almost authority, does he ask his kindly reception. His language is, " Receive him, that is, mine own bowels ; not now as a servant, but above a servant, a brother beloved, specially to me, but how much more unto thee, both in the flesh and

in the Lord? If thou count me therefore a partner, *receive him as myself.* . . . . Having confidence in thy obedience, I wrote unto thee, knowing that thou wilt also *do more than I say.*" Now, notwithstanding the positiveness with which Onesimus is asserted to be a "runaway slave," there is no proof in the whole epistle that Onesimus was a *slave* at all; the inference that he was a slave rests on the 16th verse—"Not now as a servant," &c. (*doulos*, but *doulos** is not in Greek necessarily *a slave*). There is not a particle of evidence that St. Paul forced or even urged the return of Onesimus. That he returned *as a slave* is inconsistent with the whole tone of the epistle, with the endearing epithets employed, and especially with the last clause quoted above. The circumstance related in the epistle to the Colossians (ch. iv. 7-9) also opposes that view, where Onesimus is joint bearer with Tychicus of St. Paul's message to the Colossians; the same affectionate epithet is applied to him as to Tychicus; and St. Paul says to the Colossians, (Onesimus) "is *one of you*;" i. e., of the Church or of the people of Colossæ, and "they [Tychicus and Onesimus] shall make known unto you all things which are done here." The man who bore that message was surely no *chattel*. Besides, if St. Paul were "zealous of the law," would he venture to send back a "fugitive slave," which the Jewish law so strictly forbade?

St. Paul, moreover, in another remarkable passage, while following the example of his Divine Master, whose kingdom was not of this world, in setting forth the much higher and nobler freedom of the soul, that freedom which even the slave after the flesh may possess and derive happiness from, shows his appreciation of civil freedom by advising, which he may do without risk of interfering with the civil power, "But if thou mayest be free, use it (freedom) rather." (1 Cor. vii. 21.)

The precepts and example of our Saviour and his apostles then brought about that change of feeling which over-

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* *Doulos* includes also the Roman *libertus* or *freedman*, Chrysipp. ap. Ath. vi. 93. Onesimus was probably steward, or in some responsible position in Philemon's household, thus having the opportunity of appropriating money, which St. Paul promises to repay.

threw the whole system of slavery, the way for which had been prepared by the Jewish economy, with its protection to fugitive slaves, ordained by God himself, and its denunciations against man-stealing. Christian Europe became free—the curse upon Canaan had been expiated—the Jews, as a nation, had ceased to hold slaves—Christian nations had ceased to hold slaves. Now, let the justifier of *negro slavery* point to the revelation of God's will which directed the re-establishment of slavery. No, God did not authorize it. History can here point to the source and the cause. Whence, then, came slavery again into *Christian* society? It arose, as St. Chrysostom says of the first rise of slavery, from avarice and inordinate cupidity. When thousands of adventurers, on the discovery of this new world, in their eager pursuit of wealth, tore away by violence and robbery the unfortunate sons of Africa, to toil for them in the mines and on the plantations of the West Indies and Central America, then was established that horrible iniquity, the African slave trade, and that barter in human flesh which Christianity had entirely removed. The learned Dominican Soto (1542), confessor to Charles V., in opposing this inhuman traffic soon after its establishment, says: "It is affirmed that the unhappy Ethiopians are, by fraud or force, carried away and sold as slaves. If this is true, neither those who have taken them, nor those who purchased them, nor those who hold them in bondage, can ever have a quiet conscience till they emancipate them, even if no compensation should be obtained."—(*Mackintosh's Ethic. Phil.*, p. 79.)

The justification of negro slavery at the South justifies the slave trade; nay, the advocates of the doctrine of this pamphlet are bound to sustain and defend the slave trade. The author tells us: "I believe that the number of negroes Christianized and civilized at the South, through the system of slavery, exceeds the product of (English and American) missionary labors in a proportion of thousands to one." Let us place in contrast with this system, that which was sanctioned by the "precepts and example of the apostles." St. Luke, in the Acts (viii. 26), relates how St. Philip received a special commission to go towards the South to meet an Ethiopian, and

unfold to him the interpretation of the Scriptures which he was reading. The eunuch was enlightened, converted, and baptized, and returned to his home to carry the knowledge of the Gospel of Christ to his fellow-descendants of Ham ; and perhaps then the first seeds were sown of the Church in Abyssinia which exists to this day. The apostles did not find it necessary to establish a slave trade with Africa, or to bring the body of the wretched Africans under the slave lash in order to convert their souls.

May we not justly fear that we are now, as a nation, suffering the penalty of our complicity in this great wickedness and sin ? God has said : " And he that stealeth a man and selleth him, or if he be found in his hand, he shall surely be put to death" (Exod. xxi. 16) ; and Jeremiah (xxii. 13) writes: " Woe unto him . . . . . that useth his neighbor's service without wages." God does visit the sins of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate him, i. e. of those who do not abandon the sins of their fathers ; and the children of this generation share in the iniquities of their fathers by adding to the grievances of those whom their fathers wronged. We are told that Virginia and other Southern states commenced a movement to liberate their slaves, but that it was abandoned in consequence of the interference of Northern fanatics. May we not read in this refusal to grant liberty to the oppressed the real cause of the desolation which has spread over the state which was foremost in that iniquity ? The prophet Jeremiah presents us with a similar case, which drew on it the threatened vengeance of Heaven : " And ye were now turned, and had done right in my sight, in proclaiming liberty every man to his neighbor : and ye had made a covenant before me in the house which is called by my name ; but ye turned and polluted my name, and caused every man his servant, and every man his handmaid, whom he had set at liberty at their pleasure, to return, and brought them into subjection, to be unto you for servants and for handmaids. Therefore thus saith the Lord, Ye have not hearkened unto me, in proclaiming liberty every one to his brother, and every man to his neighbor : Behold, I proclaim a liberty for you, saith the Lord,

to the sword, to the pestilence, and to the famine; and I will make you to be removed into all the kingdoms of the earth."

COLUMBIA COLLEGE, *Nov. 12th*, 1863.

NOTE.—The Rev. Dr. Howe, of Philadelphia, states in the Philadelphia Inquirer of Nov. 6, which statement the writer of this article has not seen contradicted, that "a considerable portion (of the original letter of Bishop Hopkins in 1861) was devoted to an argument 'that the Southern states have a right to secede,'" and further, "that this letter was circulated in the slave states, was read, and, as is alleged by the Southern people, did its part in 'firing the Southern heart,' and intensifying its determination to sacrifice the Union, in order to maintain and perpetuate slavery." He adds also, on the authority of a clergyman of Philadelphia, formerly of Virginia, that "Bishop Meade said, at the outbreak of this rebellion, that he had always been opposed to secession, until a letter of Bishop Hopkins convinced him that the Southern states have a right to secede." Numerous inquiries have been made among the dealers in pamphlets and private collectors for this (original) letter, but without success.

After the above was in type, a copy of the original letter (of 1861) was sent to the writer by a friend. The following extracts will show that the charge of justifying secession is only too true.

After charging upon the North every kind of hostility (individual, legislative and congressional) to slavery, the author goes on to say (p. 11 of edition of 1861): "Convinced, as well as they might be, that they could not long resist this advancing deluge of hostility, and knowing that its probable results would be a general insurrection of their slaves, a war of extermination to preserve their own lives, and the final ruin of their prospects if they remained subject to it a few years longer, many of the slave states have resolved to secede from the Union, in despair of obtaining any effectual remedy or guarantee from their uncompromising adversaries. They have desired to secede peaceably, if permitted. If not, they stand prepared to defend what they believe to be the sacred right of self-preservation. . . . . In my humble judgment, they have a right to secede, although I grant that the point, being entirely new, is not without considerable difficulty. I fear that the ingenious arguers against secession have hardly given sufficient attention to this fact, and have therefore very naturally fallen into the mistake of applying the principles of ordinary government to a Constitution which stands alone in the history of the world. . . . . But, on the other hand, the *Constitution does not deny the right*, nor *forbid the act, of secession*. The subject is not expressly adverted to at all. The power of the free States which have thus carried on their assaults upon Slavery, has at length obtained the mastery in the administration of the government, and therefore the Southern States have resorted to their *reserved rights* by seceding, as the only peaceable remedy remaining, since warnings, expostulations, and arguments, have been employed for many years, and all in vain. This act of peaceable secession they utterly deny to be treasonable, because the Constitution, in Article III., § 3, lays down the rule that 'Treason against the United States shall consist only in levying war against them or in adhering to their enemies, giving them aid and comfort.'"

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